

Dear Wisconsin Bear Hunter:

Welcome to the 1997 Bear Hunting Season!

The 1997 bear season is behind us with another excellent harvest. We again heard many positive comments from hunters indicating that bear were plentiful across their range. Our most recent survey and population model information indicates that the statewide bear population is approximately 14,000 animals, sending the message that bear are thriving in Wisconsin.

In 1996 the DNR, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, initiated a bear tagging project that resulted in the marking of 193 animals. We will continue to mark bears for the next two years with a goal of approximately 240 new animals marked yearly. If the bear you harvest has a set of these ear tags, please submit them to registration station personnel. This effort will assist the Department in determining the overall statewide bear population and provide important population information to help us manage your black bears into the 21st century.

Wisconsin's healthy bear population should continue to provide high quality hunting opportunities far into the future. Hunting, however, will only be assured through the continued cooperative management efforts of the bear hunting community and the Department of Natural Resources. It is increasingly important for each of us to improve the public's impression of bear hunting in addition to increasing our knowledge base through cooperative studies on the species. Special thanks to the Wisconsin Bear Hunter's Association and the Wisconsin Bow Hunter's Association for their leadership in these areas and for sponsoring the Regulations pamphlet.

The near future brings many challenges from organizations attacking hunting on many fronts and in many forums. The high profile activity of bear hunting is under a great deal of scrutiny. We all need to do our very best to educate others who may not be as familiar with hunting as a management tool and a sport. Let's share with them the positive situations that keep us all enthused about bear hunting. Our responses to these challenges and our conduct in the field will define the future of bear hunting and management of the bear resource in Wisconsin.

Let's make sure that the upcoming season is another success, and that we all work for the long term future of bear hunting in Wisconsin. I encourage you to report violations and to inform others of the consequences of their actions. Keep up the good work and have a safe and enjoyable hunt in 1997!

*Sincerely,
Bill Mytton, Deer and Bear Ecologist
Bureau of Wildlife Management*

Licenses and Permits

A bear hunting license is required to apply for a bear harvest permit, pursue bear, or assist bear harvest permit holders in hunting activities, including baiting. To assist with the bear hunt means helping a bear harvest permit holder hunt a bear by handling dogs, tracking, trailing, locating the bear, or otherwise aiding the permit holder. You do not need to be with a bear harvest permit holder to place bear bait.

To kill and possess a bear, you must possess a bear harvest permit. The application deadline for bear harvest permits (Resident: \$30, Nonresident: \$120) is the Friday nearest January 15th. Send applications to:

License Section
Box 7964
Madison, WI 53707.

The number of bear permits issued per management zone is based upon previous hunter success rates and current bear population estimates.

Hunters are selected using a continuous preference system. Applicants who have been unsuccessful for the greatest number of consecutive years are chosen first. Hunters must apply every year to maintain their preference status.

Firearm and Archery Restrictions

It is illegal to:

- ❖ Hunt bear with any rim-fire rifle, .17 caliber center-fire rifle, .410 shotgun, fully automatic firearm, or with ammunition loaded with full metal jacket, non-expanding type bullets.
- ❖ Use handguns, unless they are loaded with .357, .41 and .44 magnum caliber cartridges or any other caliber handgun chambered for commercially-manufactured cartridges which produce a minimum muzzle energy of 1,000 foot pounds. These handguns must have a minimum barrel length of 5½ inches measured from the muzzle to the firing pin with the action closed.
- ❖ Use a muzzleloader, unless it is a smoothbore muzzleloading firearm of .45 caliber or larger, or a rifled muzzleloading firearm of .40 caliber or larger.

- ❖ Hunt bear with a bow having a pull of less than 30 pounds, or to use arrows which have metal broadhead blades less than seven-eighths of an inch wide.
- ❖ Possess while hunting, any crossbow (except permanently disabled residents and nonresidents under DNR permit) or poisoned, drugged or explosive tipped arrow.
- ❖ Possess, place or transport, in or on any moving or stationary vehicle, any firearm, bow or crossbow, unless the firearm is unloaded and enclosed within a carrying case, and the bow or crossbow is unstrung or enclosed within a carrying case.

Road Hunting

It is illegal to:

- ❖ Hunt within 50 feet of the roadway's center.
- ❖ Discharge a firearm, or shoot an arrow from a bow or a bolt from a crossbow from or across a highway or within 50 feet of the roadway's center.

This prohibition applies to all public roads which are either paved or indicated on a current Department of Transportation county highway map. Unpaved fire lanes are exempt and shown as dotted lines on county maps.

Note: Class A disabled permit holders are exempt from certain portions of this requirement when hunting from a stationary vehicle. Contact your local DNR office for more information.

Other Restrictions

It is illegal to:

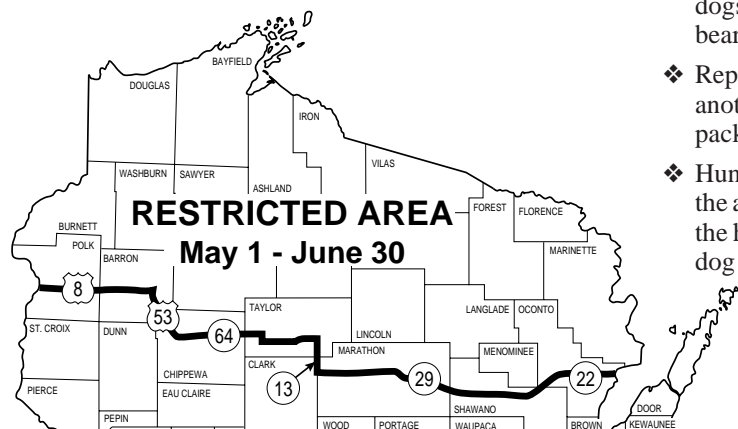
- ❖ Shoot or molest any bear in a den, hunt bear in any dump or sanitary landfill, or kill a cub or any adult bear accompanied by a cub or cubs. *If you're not sure, don't shoot!*
- ❖ Possess a bear carcass unless lawfully tagged.
- ❖ Sell, buy, trade or barter bear hides unless the claws, head and teeth are attached, and you possess a valid bear hunting license and harvest permit or conservation patron or taxidermist license. Bear claws and teeth may not be sold, purchased, traded or bartered when separated from the hide. The sale of other bear parts is also prohibited.

Dog Training and Use

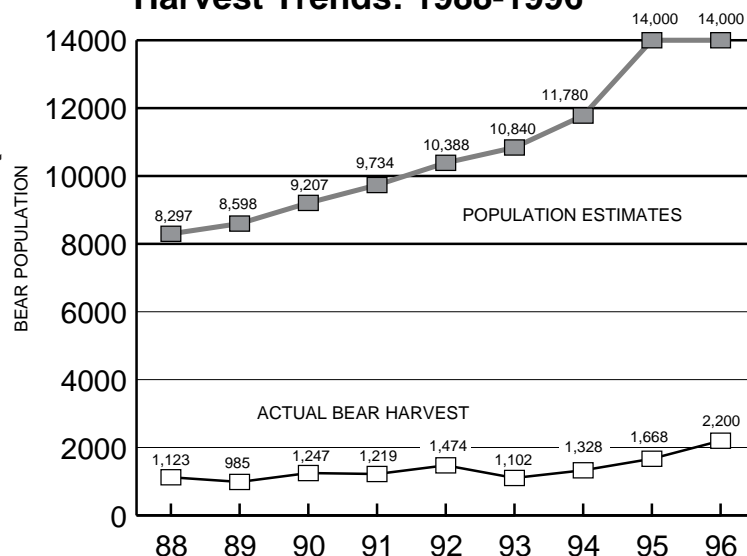
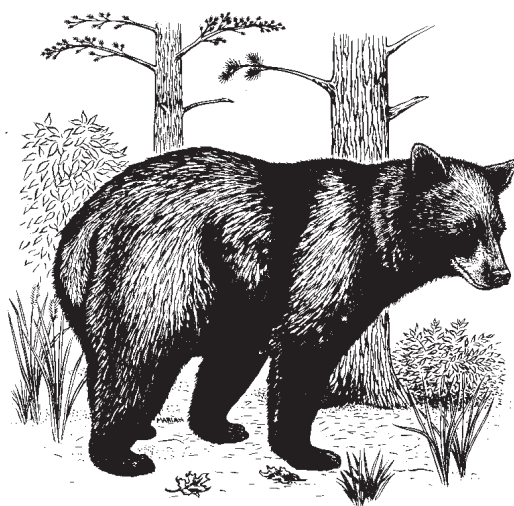
It is illegal to:

- ❖ Hunt bear with dogs, except in the non-shaded portions of zones A, A1, and B of the bear hunting management zones map during the season for dogs.
- ❖ Train dogs by pursuing bear **except** during **July 1 through August 31**. Bear dog training is not permitted during the bear hunting season.

- ❖ Train dogs on DNR lands, from April 15 through July 31, unless the dog is on a leash no longer than 8 feet, except on Class 1 field trial grounds or for bear dog training on DNR lands other than state parks after July 1.
- ❖ Hunt, train dogs, or pursue bear with a dog that is not tattooed, or that isn't wearing a collar with the owner's name and address attached.
- ❖ Allow the dogs to kill any wild animal.
- ❖ Hunt, train dogs, or pursue bear with more than 6 dogs in a single pack, regardless of the number of bear hunters or the dog's ownership.
- ❖ Replace a dog engaged in the pursuit of a bear with another dog. However, dogs may be added to the pack up to the maximum of 6 dogs.
- ❖ Hunt or pursue any free-roaming wild animal with the aid of any dog, from May 1 to June 30, north of the highways shown on the map below, except for dog trials and training under DNR permit.



Bear Population and Harvest Trends: 1988-1996



The contents of this pamphlet were prepared by the Department of Natural Resources. A portion of the printing costs were paid for by the Wisconsin Bow Hunters' Association and the Wisconsin Bear Hunter's Association.



Wisconsin Bow Hunters' Association
PO Box 240
Clintonville, WI 54929



Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association
853 Badlands Rd.
Hudson, WI 54016

**SUPPORT ETHICAL
RESPONSIBLE HUNTING**

**REPORT VIOLATIONS
CALL 1-800-847-9367**

Toll Free • Statewide • 24-Hour • Confidential

(This is not an information number.)

All conservation wardens may enter private lands at any time while performing their duties.